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SERMON

Preached before the

Honourable Houſe of Commons,

ON

Monday the 5th of NOVEMBER, 1759.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

The DUTY and MANNER of Rejoicing for National Deliverances.

A

SERMON

Preached before the

Honourable Houſe of Commons,

IN

St. *Andrew's*, DUBLIN,

On *Monday* the 5th of NOVEMBER, 1759.

By *RICHARD CHALONER COBBE*, L. L. D.
Treaſurer of St. *Patrick*'s, and Chaplain to His GRACE the LORD ARCHBISHOP of *Dublin*.

DUBLIN:

Printed by A. JAMES, in *Dame-ſtreet*, 1759.

Martis 6 Die Novembris, 1759.

ORDERED, That the Thanks of this Houſe be given to the Reverend Dr. *Cobbe*, for the excellent Sermon by him preached before this Houſe Yeſterday, at St. *Andrew*'s Church; and that he be deſired to print the ſame; and that Lord *Beresford* and Mr. *Hamilton Gorges* do acquaint him therewith.

E. Sterling, } Cler. Dom. Com.
H. Alcock, }

BRITISH MUSEUM

PSALM CXVIII. 24.

This is the Day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it.

IT is the Opinion of ſome of the beſt Interpreters, that this Pſalm was compoſed by DAVID, to be publickly ſung at the Feaſt of his Inauguration; when, after the Death of *Saul* and his Son, he was placed on the Throne of *Iſrael*. To awaken the Attention of a People, prone to Ingratitude and Diſobedience, to a lively Senſe of the Mercies of God, he, on this Occaſion, enumerates the many Dangers he had been expoſed to, from the Treachery of SAUL, the Hoſtilities of ISHBOSHETH, and the Invaſions of the *Philiſtines*: from all which, he aſſerts, he never could have eſcaped but by the immediate Aſſiſtance of Heaven.

INDEED,

INDEED, No one ſeems to have been under a ſtronger Conviction of the over-ruling Providence and Power of God, in all Events, than the Royal Author of the Pſalm before us. The certain Perſuaſion that *not even an Hair of his Head fell to the Ground* without the Permiſſion of an Omnipotent Being, appears to have been the ruling Principle of his Life, the Maſter-ſpring of all his Actions. Hence he inſtructs the *Iſraelites* to ſing, *This is the Day which the Lord hath made.* Not that any Period of Time paſſes without the Guidance and Aſſiſtance of the Almighty; but *that Day* he had more peculiarly diſtinguiſhed, by ſetting a King over a grievouſly-afflicted People, reinſtating in their antient Privileges a miſerably-diſtracted Nation, and recovering their religious Worſhip from the Groſſneſs of Idolatry. This Series of Events was ſo very aſtoniſhing, ſo much beyond even their fondeſt Hopes, ſo far out of the Reach of all human Strength and Council, that the pious King, with a noble Warmth, and becoming Humility, labours, through the whole Pſalm, to inſpire his Subjects with a grateful Reverence of the Majeſty of God, the great Author of all their Bleſſings. *We will rejoice*, ſays he, *and be glad in it*; "We will celebrate *this Day* with "the moſt publick Demonſtrations of Joy, with every ſenſi-"ble Evidence of a truly-religious Heart." In ſhort, this whole Compoſition is filled with the warmeſt Sentiments of Gratitude, highly animated by a juſt Senſe of an over-ruling, bounteous Providence; whoſe Mercies the inſpired Writer never mentions, but he is all Adoration and Praiſe to the Giver

ver of them—*Thou art my God, and I will thank thee: Thou art my God, and I will praiſe thee.*

THE Pſalm then, from whence the Text is taken, being, in its *primary* Senſe, an Exhortation to the People of *Iſrael* to return Thanks to God for *his merciful Goodneſs* towards them, is very applicable to the Nature of thoſe Deliverances which the Tribes of our *Iſrael* are now, in a moſt ſolemn Manner, aſſembled to commemorate. The annual Return of this auſpicious Day, naturally calls to our Remembrance *the great Things God hath done for us, whereof we* have Cauſe to *rejoice*. It enlivens every ſincere Lover of his Country, his Liberty, his Religion; and diſpoſes him to look up, and adore the Source of all his Happineſs. Such an one may juſtly pronounce *This is the Day which the Lord hath made*; a Day, on which the baſe Deſigns of the profeſſed Enemies to our Eſtabliſhment in Church and State were entirely diſappointed: a Day, on which, from the Jaws of Death the Almighty raiſed us, as it were, to Life, and cauſed each almoſt broken *Heart to ſing for Joy*. We cannot, therefore, more uſefully employ our Thoughts on the Words I have choſen, than by looking back, and conſidering,

Firſt, the Mercies conferred upon us as on this Day; *The Day which the Lord hath made.*

Secondly, the moſt proper Means of expreſſing our Joy and Gladneſs; *We will rejoice and be glad in it.*

From that memorable Æra, when many States and Kingdoms threw off the oppreſſive Yoke, and diſclaimed Obedience to the *Roman* Pontiff; when the Purity of the Chriſtian Church began to recover its primitive Beauty, by wiping off the foul Stains that had defaced it, the artful Spirit of *Popery* began to rouſe, and exert itſelf. Alarmed at the Encroachments on its aſſumed Prerogative, various Schemes of Revenge were formed, various Deſigns laid, to recover the exceſſive Power, and ineſtimable Treaſures, which Superſtition had given to the See of *Rome*. What could not be effected by open Violence, was attempted by Subtilty. Where *Proteſtantiſm* had *built her ſtrong Holds*, *Rome*'s favourite Engine, *Divide et Impera*, was there employed to undermine them. The Hiſtory of thoſe Times gives us Authority to ſay, that no Attempt was omitted by the zealous Diſciples of *Popery* to vindicate their Cauſe, and ſnatch the Crown from the Heads of the Defenders of our Faith. At length, to crown all their *religious* Endeavours, the horrid, unparallelled Plot of this Day was meditated; by which, at one fatal Blow, the whole Legiſlative Power of *England* was to have been deſtroyed. Had that dreadful Treaſon, tranſacted with ſuch Art, and carried on with ſo much Secrecy, ſucceeded, the *Proteſtant* Intereſt muſt have totally ſunk, and theſe Nations been ſwallowed in the Ruin. But ſecret as it was, it lay open to the all-ſeeing Eye of GOD; when, like HAMAN, they had appointed the Hour of Deſtruction, then did He infatuate their Counſels, defeat their Policies, and confound their Devices:

Then

Then did He *a marvellous Work amongst his People, even a marvellous Work and a Wonder.*

The Diſappointment of this barbarous Treachery did not, however, damp the Fervor of Popiſh Zeal; nor did its virulent Perſecutions ceaſe, till it pleaſed the Almighty to make this Day again memorable, by the ſeaſonable and happy Arrival of his Majeſty King WILLIAM, delegated to compleat our glorious Deliverance. For in the preceding Reign, *Popery* ſcorned to act any longer under a Diſguiſe; It was armed with Power, and, from the Encouragement it met with, flattered itſelf with triumphing over all who ſhould dare to make the leaſt Oppoſition. To remove all Obſtacles, the moſt arbitrary Meaſures were taken; the Laws, eſtabliſhed for our Defence and Security, violated; and thoſe Liberties, which ought to be ever dear and valuable to us, were tottering on the very Precipice of Deſtruction. In ſhort, ſuch an entire Change and Subverſion of our happy Conſtitution were ſo openly deſigned and attempted, that it obliged thoſe who acted upon truly Patriot Principles, Principles juſtifiable by the Laws of God and Man, to prevent, if poſſible, the impending Ruin. And, praiſed be GOD! after various and ſurprizing Turns of Providence, was the glorious *Revolution* happily compleated, under the auſpicious Conduct of that Prince, whoſe Name, by all who enjoy, and know how to value, the Bleſſings of that happy Event, *ought ever to be had in Remembrance.*

THE Bleſſings confirmed to us by that happy Settlement are invaluable. The moſt material one is, our *Religion*; a Religion, as far removed from idolatrous Corruptions on the one Hand, as from a miſguided Zeal on the other. Such is the Religion which was miraculouſly preſerved, and continued to us: Of which, however it may be maligned and caluminated, we may juſtly ſay, with the *Apoſtle*, that *after the Way which* THEY *call* HERESY, *ſo worſhip we the God of our Fathers*; *believing all Things which are written in the Law, in the Prophets*, and in the GOSPEL.

BUT not only our *Religion*, but, our *Rights* and *Properties*, which are, perhaps, more apt to awaken the Attention, and engage more forcibly the Affections of Mankind, were then firmly ſecured to us. The Fear of groaning any longer under the galling Yoke of Oppreſſion and Tyranny ceaſed; and the joyous Proſpect aroſe of our being, for the future, an happy People. For, to prevent our relapſing into the like miſerable Circumſtances, a Prince of the *Popiſh* Religion was for ever excluded from the Throne, and One blindly attached to the Intereſts of the Church of *Rome* was, and, by the Law of Reaſon, ought always to be judged, incapable of governing, and ruling over a Free *Proteſtant* People. Theſe are the Principles on which the Throne of theſe Kingdoms is eſtabliſhed; and it is our unſpeakable Happineſs to live under ſo excellent a Government.

SUCH were the happy Conſequences of that *Day which the Lord made* by his all-powerful Interpoſition, and repeated Deliverances; for which let us conſider,

Secondly, the moſt proper Means of expreſſing our Joy and Gladneſs, *We will rejoice and be glad in it.*

A grateful Acknowledgment of Mercies received is one of the moſt reaſonable and pleaſing Returns, that can poſſibly be offered by Man to his Creator: It is fulfilling one great End for which God has diſplayed to him the Works of his Creation and Providence. The Deſign of the Almighty in conferring Benefits is, to teach Men to eſteem, and ſet a proper Value upon, them; and point out to them their Dependance on the Hand that beſtowed them. To this End, He, *who hath made us glad through his Works*, hath ordained thoſe Works *to be had in Remembrance*; and demands from us, though it can make no Acceſſion to his Greatneſs, the full Tribute of our Praiſe. And can we read the Hiſtory of this Day, without feeling ourſelves inſpired with a Zeal for the Glory of God, and the Promotion of his Honour? Can we reflect how often his darling Attribute of Mercy has been exerted in our Behalf, without joyning moſt devoutly in the pious Exultation of the *Pſalmiſt*, *God is the Lord, who hath ſhewed us Light*; *bind the Sacrifice with Cords, yea, even unto the Horns of the Altar?* Shall the *Jew* religiouſly obſerve the Feaſt of *Purim*, and ſhall the *Chriſtian* forget the Hand which *wrought his*

 Deliverance?

Deliverance? The Memory of God's Bleſſings was Part of the Religion of his antient People, and ſhall we ungratefully deem it leſs eſſential to ours, under the new Diſpenſation of Grace? The Language of Heaven is *Hallelujah*; and ſhall we not moſt gladly imitate the bleſſed Saints and Angels? In Fact; Gratitude for Mercies conferred on us is as much our Duty, as Application for future Bleſſings is our Intereſt.

But let not our Gratitude ſtop here; let it have its due Effect; let not only *our Lips*, but *our Lives*, expreſs it. If the Memorial of this Day be, as it ever ought to be, imprinted on our Hearts, let the Impreſſion be ſeen through our Morals. To enquire into the Returns we have already made for our manifold Deliverances, would be but a diſagreeable Taſk. From the preſent Proſpect of our Manners, we have no other Encouragement, than with Horror and Remorſe, to look back upon the paſt. However that may be, this is a Truth, which cannot too often be inculcated, that National Reformation, which muſt be effected by that of Individuals, is the only Path to National Happineſs; the only Means of averting the Calamities, from which we have been reſcued, and continuing the Bleſſings, we now enjoy, to Us, and our Poſterity.

Do we ſincerely regard the *Religion* that has been preſerved to us? Let our Gratitude be ſhewn by our *Zeal* to maintain its Purity, and by our exemplary Obedience to its Ordinances. This certainly is the Duty of all who profeſs themſelves *Proteſtants*; but it is doubly incumbent on us of this

this Kingdom: For *Popery* is not only at, but within, our Doors: Whatever may be its Diſguiſe, the Materials of its Compoſition are the ſame: It has the ſame Zeal; the ſame Attachments to foreign Powers, and Intereſts; the ſame Arts, and the ſame Deſigns. This unhappy Increaſe of the Enemies to our Church has been, I fear, in a great Meaſure, owing to our Indifference and Inattention; the Sources of every Thing that can poſſibly be prejudicial to Society. But if the Security of our Religious and Civil Rights, which muſt ever be cloſely connected; If every Thing that can make this Iſland happy, be worthy of our Care; Theſe are the Inducements to enter upon a Work of Reformation. To the Honour of the preſent Age I ſpeak it, this Work, through the happy Eſtabliſhment of *Charter-Schools*, is now begun: And that God would be pleaſed to proſper their Endeavours, ought to be the daily Prayer of all, who have a Regard for the *Proteſtant* Religion, and Love for their Country. In the mean Time, it would well become us to ſtrive, by the mildeſt Methods, (the Characteriſtic of true Chriſtianity) to win over thoſe, who have been educated in the Church of *Rome*, to our Principles; and convince them, as well as all other Gainſayers, that our Religion is truly founded on the Goſpel of *Jeſus Chriſt*, by being each of us a lively Tranſcript of its Commands.

Do we eſteem our *Rights* and *Liberties?* As we would ſecure the former from Oppreſſion, let us guard the latter from Licentiouſneſs. Let us——But on You, YE GUARDIANS OF OUR RELIGION AND LIBERTIES! on You

You it lies to promote the one, and to protect the other. You repreſent the Nation: The Eyes of the Nation are upon you. Teach them, by your Example, Religion: Teach them, by your Perſeverance, Integrity: Teach them, by your Conduct, Virtue. Your Influence, as does that of all Men of Rank and Station in Life, extends to the whole Community: It breathes a Spirit into the Actions of every Claſs of Men, how inconſiderable ſoever they may be, how remote from the Sphere in which you move. On You then it lies to ſecure the natural Beauty and Strength of our Conſtitution, by ſtemming the Tide of Corruption and Vice, and enforcing the Laws by your *Practice*, as well as by your *Authority*.

God Almighty has been graciouſly pleaſed to favour our Attempts for preſerving our Rights and Liberties beyond what we could reaſonably hope, infinitely beyond what we deſerve: And the Succeſs with which he has crowned our Arms, and thoſe of our glorious Allies, ought to be an additional Motive to our Gratitude for the Mercies of this Day: For which it is our Duty *to rejoice and be glad*; The Duty of us all to expreſs our Thanks for the Favours of Heaven, by ſtudying to deſerve them—To join with one Heart and Voice in imploring a Continuance of God's Bleſſing upon our *Jeruſalem*: That *Peace* may *be within her Walls, and Plenteouſneſs within her Palaces.* —— As we pray thus for *Ourſelves*, ſo it is our Duty to beſeech God to pour down *the Riches of his Grace* upon our KING, by whom all our Enjoyments are ſecured.—— It is our Happineſs to live

live under the Government of a Prince, who makes the Laws the Rule of his Actions: Who wiſely placeth his higheſt Ambition in being, in Reality, the Father of his People. —— It is our Duty to beſeech God to grant, that We, and all his Subjects, may, in our ſeveral Stations, faithfully and zealouſly obey this beſt of Kings, with all Honour and Reſpect to his Perſon, and dutiful Submiſſion to his Authority: That He will be pleaſed to add yet many Years to his happy Reign, undiſturbed by Domeſtic Treachery, or Foreign Invaſions: And that, when it ſhall pleaſe God to exchange his corruptible for an incorruptible Crown, there never may be One wanting in his Houſe to ſucceed him, as well in his Virtues, as in the Government of theſe Kingdoms; that our Poſterity *may ſee his Childrens Children, and Peace upon* ISRAEL. AMEN. Let every PROTESTANT ſincerely ſay AMEN.

Now to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghoſt, be aſcribed, as is moſt due, all Honour, Praiſe, Might, Majeſty, and Dominion, now, and for ever. Amen.

F I N I S.

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